

MADISON, WISCONSIN
STATE JOURNAL

M - 74,728
S - 118,244

DEC 18 1975

Bush starts out with candor

Score one for George Bush.

Bush, President Ford's choice as new director of the Central Intelligence Agency, was asked repeatedly in his confirmation hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee if he intended to run for political office in 1976.

"I do not," said Bush.

How about the vice presidency?

Bush said he would not seek any office if confirmed as CIA director.

That wasn't enough for the senators and one asked if Bush were asked to accept a vice presidential nomination "would you refuse?"

"I cannot in all honesty tell you that I would not accept," said Bush, who added that he couldn't conceive of anyone refusing to accept an offer to become a nominee for the nation's second highest post.

"To my knowledge, no one in the history of the republic has ever been asked to renounce his political birthright as the price of confirmation for any office," said Bush.

Nor should they be asked to renounce it.

Sen. Frank Church, the Idaho Democrat who is flirting with the presidency after weeks of coy denials, says he still is not convinced that it was "a sufficient disavowal" of political ambition.

That makes such an ambition for high national office a pretty sorry thing in the eyes of Church, a fellow politician.

It took Sen. John Stennis (D-Mass.) to put things in perspective when he said wryly: "I would question your (Bush's) judgment if you think you are going to use the CIA as a stepping stone to the vice presidency."

To oblivion, maybe; to the vice presidency, highly doubtful.

Bush is a man with a political past and perhaps a political future, but one who acknowledges it with candor and sees the pursuit of politics as an "asset."

Church and others may not accept Bush on this basis, but they cannot ac-

use him of lack of candor and conviction in answering their questions.

Lost library

United Press International reported some time back that congressional staffs and budgets are rising more than 15 times faster than the country's population.

In 1954, the members of Congress had 4,500 staff people and an annual budget of \$42-million. Today, the staffs number 16,000 people and the budget has gone above \$300-million.

This is why the \$90-million James Madison Memorial Building, which is nearing completion, probably will house members of the House of Representatives and their staffs instead of being used by the Library of Congress, as planned.

The library had intended to bring together its collections (31 million pieces) and staff under one roof. The library now operates a dozen scattered buildings in Washington, D.C.

Have the increased staffs meant improved service for constituents?

Judging by polls, public confidence in Congress has never been lower.

The odds still are against the Library of Congress getting to use the building that was designed for its use, however.

The House Public Office Works Committee soon will be asked to authorize \$30-million to complete the building and to convert it into a fourth House office building.

Oh, yes, a promise will be attached to build another Madison library nearby. Some time, that is.

The postal service says it's going to appeal Judge John Sirica's denial of a proposed increase of first-class postage from 10 to 13 cents.

Great.

If justice is consistent, it will take years for the appeal to clear the courts.